

Animal Services Officer Training Program: Foundational and Essential Skills Development

Upon hire, a new Animal Services Officer (ASO) will undergo a foundational, on-the-job training period of approximately three months. This training will consist of ride-alongs with the Animal Protection Police Officers and Animal Control Officers from neighboring jurisdictions as well as time training in the animal shelter. Additionally, ASOs will complete the following training to fulfill state requirements and develop into well-rounded leaders in their field.

Job Critical Training		
ASOs will be required to complete these trainings in their first year, which until completed, will temporarily limit their ability to perform certain core functions independently.		
Training	Instructor	Objective
Animal Control Officer Basic Training	Instructors are comprised of subject matter experts and Department of Criminal Justice Services certified instructors.	120-hour ACO academy based on curriculum outlined by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
Humane Animal Euthanasia Training	VDACS – Office of Veterinary Services	Classroom and technical training for performing humane euthanasia proficiently.
Safe Capture Chemical Immobilization of Wild and Domestic Animals	San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance	Classroom and technical training for sedating domestic and wild animals using equipment such as tranquilizer dart guns and hypodermic needles.
Rifle Training	Fairfax County Police Department	Classroom and technical training for safely utilizing rifles for humane euthanasia of wildlife.

Essential Skills Training		
The Department of Animal Services will be engaging with county and industry experts to provide specialized trainings in these areas.		
Training	Instructor	Objective
Wildlife Identification and Triage	Wildlife Veterinarian (Wildlife Center of VA or local wildlife partner)	Identifying wildlife species and learning basic triage practices to humanely capture and transport animals.
Behavior Identification and Animal Handling	Behavior Expert & Certified Professional Dog Trainer	Learning behavior signals in animals and making safe handling decisions based on identifying their behavior.
Large Animal Training	Large Animal Rescue Group	Developing animal husbandry knowledge of large animals such as horses and cattle.
Veterinary Forensics	Veterinarian with experience testifying in court	Developing veterinary medicine skills to identify clinical symptoms of neglect and abuse.
Court & Legal Training	Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney	Develop legal knowledge to investigate and testify on behalf of civil and criminal cases in court.
Mental Health Crisis Training	Fairfax County Police Department / Community Services Board	Enhance understanding/empathy for and effectively communicate with individuals in a mental health crisis.
Self Defense Training	Fairfax County Police Department	Basic self-protection classes tailored towards ASOs in field.
Human Services Training	Fairfax County Department of Human Services	Understanding and being part of a solution to the systemic problems causing animal welfare issues in the community.